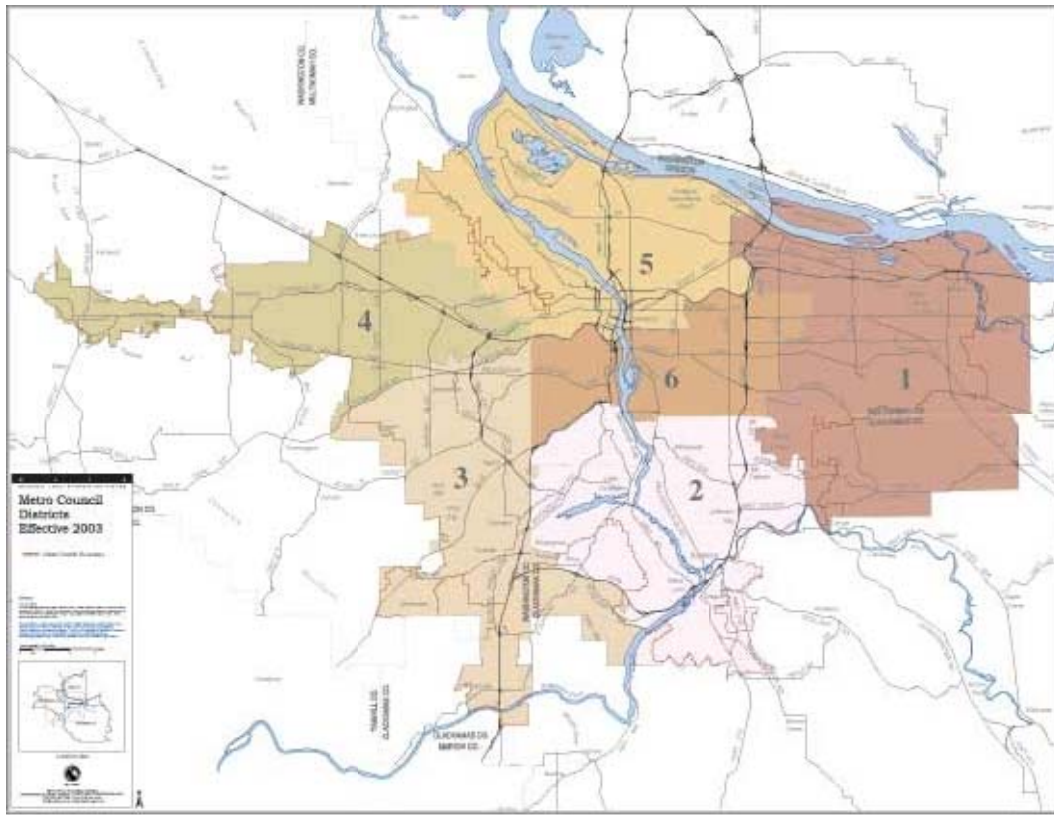

The Portland Region: Metro and the Metro Council

Overview

Metro is considered one of the more innovative regional governments operating in the United States for two reasons. First, it is unique in that it has the only directly-elected regional council in the United States, and operates under a home-rule charter. Second, it is also one of the few regional entities to fully integrate transportation functions with land use planning, solid waste management, parks & recreation services, and civic facility management.

The Region

Metro serves the 1.3 million people living in the urbanized areas of Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties and the 24 cities in the Portland metropolitan area. The region is 462 sq. miles, 86% of which is included in the Urban Growth Boundary designated by Metro (2005).



Primary Transportation Responsibilities

	Regional Systems Planning	Financial Resources	Capital and Infrastructure Construction	Systems Operation and Maintenance
Local	-	-	-	-
County	-	-	-	-
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The region's principle planning agency. Plans investment and mobility strategies for the three-county area Congestion management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No taxing authority for transportation. Administers federal and state grants. 	-	-

Metro's primary transportation responsibility is regional systems planning. It fills this role in conjunction with its role as the region's primary land use planner and provider of regional parks, solid waste treatment, recreation services and exposition facilities. In this way, transportation plans are directly driven by regional land use policies and plans.

While Metro does have taxing authority independent of state and municipal governments, that authority does not fund transportation projects.

Metro serves as the region's federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and allocates federal transportation funds (in conjunction with the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation or JPACT).

Structure

Since it was formed in 1979, Metro has been the nation's only elected regional government. Metro consists of seven members: six councilors elected by district, and a president elected region-wide. Terms are four years. Council governs by majority rule with the president voting only when there is a tie.

Metro and JPACT together function as the region's MPO and transportation policy-making body. The 17-member JPACT is an appointed body consisting of municipal officials, transit representatives, and representatives from various governmental agencies (including WSDOT).

Metro has seven departments:

- Planning
- Finance & Administration
- Public Affairs & Government Relations
- Human Resources
- Regional Parks & Greenspace
- Oregon Zoo
- Solid Waste and Recycling

Financing

Metro's only financing function is in the prioritization of transportation projects for the purposes of allocating federal funds. Local jurisdictions nominate projects from their transportation system plans to be included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Regionally significant projects that meet Metro's policies and goals are added to the RTP (financial constrained system) and are then eligible for federal funding. Every two years, regional decision makers choose which of the highest priority projects to fund.

History

Metro was formed in 1979 when voters approved it as a special service district to provide land use and transportation planning services, as well as solid waste management and operation of the metropolitan zoo. Over the years, the legislature charged Metro with additional responsibilities, including operation of regional parks, solid waste disposal, and operation of the Oregon Convention Center and other civic facilities.

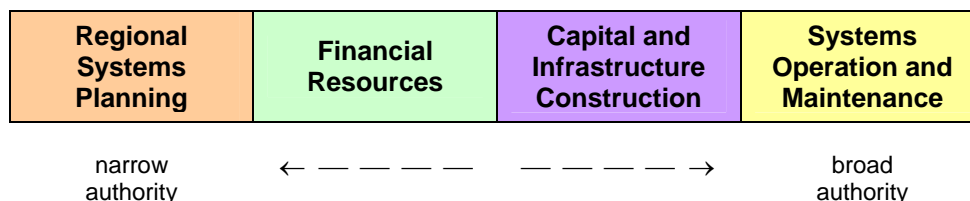
In 1992, voters elected to approve a home-rule charter for Metro, which gave the regional government powers beyond those expressly granted by the Legislature. The charter gives Metro authority to levy voter-approved taxes to support itself, as well as some limited applicability taxes that do not require voter approval. Metro can also charge fees for services it provides.

Governance Elements

- **Municipal Membership is Voluntary or Required**
Metro was created by voter-approved statute. Participation is not voluntary. Metro has strong authority over member jurisdictions in its approval power over local land use and transportation plans.
- **The Size of the Region**
The region is limited to the urbanized areas of the tri-county area (462 sq. miles). Regional leadership recognizes that some "spill over" affects are reaching beyond the region's jurisdiction, and that collaboration with adjacent regions is necessary.
- **The Mode Responsibilities of the Authority**
Metro's transportation responsibilities mainly relate to roadway projects. Transit services are provided by Tri-Met. However, in its transportation and land-use planning, Metro is recognized for its integration of multi-modal and non-motorized transportation systems.

- **The Transportation Functions of the Authority**

Metro's transportation functions are mostly limited to regional systems planning.



- **Land Use, Economic Development, and other Responsibilities**

Metro has a wider array of functions than any other MPO in the nation. Oregon's growth management system allows land use and transportation planning functions to be consolidated regionally, with minimal redundancy at the local or state level. The system requires that plans and policy goals be coordinated and approved.

- **Regional Authority Leadership**

Metro is unique in that it is governed by a directly-elected council, with six councilors elected by district and a president elected region-wide.

- **Revenue-Sharing or Sub-Regional Equity**

Metro has neither a revenue-sharing mechanism nor a sub-regional equity requirement in its transportation responsibilities. In the prioritization process, there is a RTP cap on the maximum dollar amount of the aggregate cost of the projects from each county (determined by a population formula), but there is no quota system in the funding process to guarantee equity. Instead, equity is one of the factors that Metro decision-makers consider in selecting projects to fund.